

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1803

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TAGS: PFOR, MARR, CA

SUBJECT: PRESS MISQUOTE OF AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT ON
CANADIAN DEFENSE EFFORT

REF: OTTAWA 1933

FOLLOWING EXCHANGES TOOK PLACE IN COMMONS QUESTION PERIOD
MAY 13:

BEGIN QUOTE:

BREWIN (NDP); MR. SPEAKER, MAY I ASK THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS WHETHER HE HAS READ THE STATEMENT RE-
PORTED TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR
TO CANADA IN WHICH HE SAID THAT A MAJOR IRRITANT BETWEEN
OUR TWO COUNTRIES WAS THE LACK OF ADEQUATE DEFENCE SPENDING
BY CANADA? DOES THE MINISTER PROPOSE TO RESPOND TO THE
AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS?

HON. ALLAN J. MACEACHEN: YES, MR. SPEAKER, I NOTICED
THAT REPORT IN THE GLOBE AND MAIL THIS MORNING. MY HON,
FRIEND MAY BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THAT THE AMERICAN
AMBASSADOR BELIEVES HE HAS BEEN GROSSLY MISQUOTED.

INSTEAD OF SAYING DEFENCE WAS A MAJOR IRRITANT, HE
HAD SAID IT WAS A PROMISING AVENUE OF COOPERATION.

MR. BREWIN: A SUPPLEMENTARY, MR. SPEAKER. NO DOUBT

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THE AMBASSADOR HAS EVERY RIGHT TO EXPRESS HIS OWN

VIEWS. WILL THE MINISTER CONVEY TO THE AMBASSADOR THE VIEW HELD BY MANY CANADIANS THAT THE TROUBLE IS NOT UNDERSPENDING IN CANADA ON DEFENCE BUT GROSS OVERSPENDING BY THE UNITED STATES ON DEFENCE SUCH AS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE TRIDENT SUBMARINE BASE WHICH IS GOING TO PROVIDE THE MEANS TO DESTROY THE WHOLE WORLD MANY TIMES OVER AT VAST EXPENSE.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: OH, OH.

MR. BREWIN: MR. SPEAKER, SOME OF MY FRIENDS DO NOT LIKE THIS FACT OF LIFE BUT THAT IS NOT GOING TO STOP ME POUNDING AT IT. WILL THE MINISTER SUGGEST TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT THIS IS PART OF WHAT THE FORMER UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENCE, ROBERT MCNAMARA, CALLED THE MAD MOMENTUM OF THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE?

MR. MACEACHEN: MR. SPEAKER, WHILE AMBASSADOR ENDERS IS ARRANGING FOR A RETRACTION FROM THE GLOBE AND MAIL FOR THE MISREPORTING OF HIS REMARKS, AT THE SAME TIME I WILL BE CLARIFYING THE HON. MEMBER'S QUESTION IN MY OWN MIND SO THAT I MIGHT BE IN A POSITION TO ANSWER AT A LATER DATE.

MR. MCKINNON (PC): MY QUESTION, DIRECTED TO THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE, IS ALLIED TO THE QUESTION ASKED BY (MR. BREWIN) ONLY I DIRECT IT TO THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE AS HE HAS GREATER RESPONSIBILITY I BELIEVE FOR THE INADEQUACIES OF OUR DEFENCES. IN A SPEECH TO A CANADAIN-AMERICAN RELATIONS SEMINAR IN WINNIPEG, U.S. AMBASSADOR ENDERS SAID A SATISFACTORY LEVEL OF CANADIAN MILITARY SPENDING IS CRITICAL TO THE DEFENCE OF NORTH AMERICA BECAUSE THE US IS CLOSE TO THE MARGIN POINT WHEN IT COMES TO MAINTAINING AN EFFECTIVE DEFENCE OVER EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA. HE ALSO SAID THAT ONE OF THE MAJOR IRRITANTS IN CANADA-US RELATIONS HAS DEVELOPED BECAUSE MANY AMERICANS BELIEVE CANADA GIVES TOO LOW A PRIORITY TO DEFENCE SPENDING. WOULD THE MINISTER CARE TO COMMENT ON AMBASSADOR ENDERS' ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION WHICH CANADA HAS BEEN MAKING TO THE DEFENCE OF THE ALLIANCE AND ALSO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT OUR FUTURE COMMITMENTS SHOULD BE?

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MR. RICHARDSON: THE SECOND PART OF THE QUESTION WAS ANSWERED IN THE RESPONSE TO AN EARLIER QUESTION. I UNDERSTAND, AS MY COLLEAGUE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SAID A FEW MOMENTS AGO, THAT AMBASSADOR ENDERS SAID IN HIS STATEMENT THAT THE DEFENCE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES WAS A PROMISING AREA OF COOPERATION.

END QUOTE

ENDERS

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